AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1.   (Currently amended) A stereoscopic image processing apparatus for calculating a parallax between a pair of stereographic images, comprising:

correlation evaluating means for evaluating a correlation of brightness between a first pixel block provided in one of said pair of stereographic images and a second pixel block provided in the other of said pair of stereographic images; and

region size changing means for changing a size of said first and second pixel blocks for said correlation evaluating means.

Claim 2.   (Currently amended) The stereoscopic image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said a size of said first and second pixel blocks is changed in accordance with an area where said first pixel block is located in the respective pair of images.

Claim 3.   (Currently amended) The stereoscopic image processing apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a boundary determining section, the boundary determining section being configured to divide the stereographic images wherein said area is divided into two areas, an upper area and a lower area, defined by a horizontal boundary line.

Claim 4.   (Currently amended) The stereoscopic image processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the region size changing means changes said size of said first and second pixel blocks is changed to said a first size when said first pixel block is located in said lower area.

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Claim 5.   (Currently amended) The stereoscopic image processing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said area of the stereographic images is divided into a plurality of areas and said a size of said first and second pixel blocks is changed to a respective specified size of said first pixel block in accordance with said respective areas where said first pixel block is located.

Claim 6.   (Currently amended) The stereoscopic image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first and second pixel blocks have a first size and a second size which is, the second size being larger than said first size.

Claim 7.   (Currently amended) The stereoscopic image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the region size changing means changes said size of said first and second pixel blocks is changed in accordance with imaging conditions, the imaging conditions including rain, fog, snow, backlight, nighttime, snow on road, stain or droplet on front windshield.

Claim 8.   (Currently amended) A stereoscopic image processing apparatus for calculating a parallax between a pair of images, comprising:

correlation evaluating means for evaluating a correlation of brightness between a first pixel block provided in one of said pair of images and a second pixel block provided in the other of said pair of images;

weighting factor means for applying weighting a factor to each of pixel constituting said first and second pixel blocks in evaluating said correlation; and

weighting factor changing means for changing said weighting factor for said

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correlation evaluating means, <u>wherein:</u>

<u>the weight factor is established to 0 at a surrounding region away from a central region of the first and second pixel blocks to reduce the size of the first and second pixel blocks in a small pixel block comparison, and</u>

<u>the weight factor is established at 1 the surrounding region away from the central region of the first and second pixel blocks to increase the size of the first and second pixel blocks in a larger pixel block comparison</u>.

Claim 9.   (Cancelled)

Claim 10.   (Currently amended) A stereoscopic image processing method of calculating a parallax between a pair of <u>stereographic</u> images, comprising:

evaluating a correlation of brightness between a first pixel block provided in one of said pair of <u>stereographic</u> images and a second pixel block provided in the other of said pair of <u>stereographic</u> images; and

changing a size of said first and second pixel blocks<u>,</u>

<u>wherein the changing of the first and second pixel blocks includes changing the pixel blocks in accordance with an area where the first pixel block is located.</u>

Claim 11.   (cancelled)

Claim 12.   (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~11~~<u>10</u> further comprising dividing said area into two areas, an upper area and a lower area, by a horizontal boundary line.

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Claim 13.   (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~11~~10, further comprising

dividing said area into a plurality of areas by a plurality of boundary lines.

Claims 14. (Previously Presented) A stereoscopic image processing method of calculating a

parallax between a pair of images, comprising the steps of:

evaluating a correlation of brightness between a first pixel block provided in one of

said pair of images and a second pixel block provided in the other of said pair of images;

applying a weighting a factor to each of pixel constituting said first and second pixel

blocks for said in evaluating said correlation; and

changing over said weighting factor for said in evaluating said correlation.

Claim 15.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a parallax

calculating means for calculating the parallax between the pair of images based upon the

correlation of brightness.

Claim 16.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the region size

changing means changes a size of the first and second pixel blocks based upon the location of

one of the first and second pixel blocks within a corresponding one of the pair of images.

Claim 17.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the region size

changing means changes a size of the first and second pixel blocks based upon the location of

one of the first and second pixel blocks within a corresponding one of the pair of images with

respect to a horizontal line in said corresponding one of the pair of images.

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Claim 18.   (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the region size changing means changes a size of the first and second pixel blocks such that said size of said first and second pixel blocks is larger above the horizontal line and smaller below the horizontal line.